

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 04045 021830Z

43

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LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR GR US

SUBJECT: US-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS-PREPARING THE GROUND FOR
ROUND III

REF: A. STATE 123252; B. ATHENS 3370

1. CALOGERAS RETURNED TO ATHENS A FEW DAYS AGO FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE OF OVER TWO WEEKS DURING WHICH TIME HE WAS IN MADRID REPRESENTING GREECE AT THE NEGOTIATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ORGANIZATION. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF THE DEPTS REFTEL, STEARNS ARRANGED TO HAVE LUNCH WITH HIM JUN 2 IN ORDER TO DISCUSS TIMETABLE OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN GREEK AND US REPRESENTATIVES THIS SUMMER.

2. AT LUNCHEON MEETING CALOGERAS AND STEARNS AGREED THAT IT WOULD NOT BE DESIRABLE TO FIX DATE FOR ROUND III PLENARY DISCUSSIONS. SECOND ROUND OF TALKS HAD CLEARLY DEFINED BASIC POSITIONS AND KEY ISSUES. IN COMING MONTHS MOST PRACTICAL APPROACH WOULD BE TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OF DETAIL IN SUBGROUP MEETINGS DEVOTED TO PRINCIPAL PROBLEM AREAS DEVELOPED IN ROUND II. ASSUMING THAT SATISFACTORY PROGRESS WAS MADE IN SUBGROUPE DISCUSSIONS, ROUND III COULD PROBABLY BE SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER. CALOGERAS SAID THAT HE WOULD TOUCH BASE WITH BITSIOS ABOUT THIS TENTATIVE SCHEDULE BUT BE-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ATHENS 04045 021830Z

LIEVED PERSONALLY THAT IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO GREEK SIDE.

3. STEARNS THEN OUTLINED POSSIBLE SCHEDULE FOR SUBGROUP MEETINGS WHICH, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION, CALOGERAS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE:

A. HOMEPORTING TALKS TO BE HELD THE WEEK OF JUNE 16, AT WHICH TIME US SIDE WILL PRESENT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE USE OF PIER AT ELEFSIS AND OTHER RESIDUAL HOMEPORTING FACILITIES;

B. US PRESENCE AT HELLENIKON AIRBASE TO BE DISCUSSED WEEK OF JUN 30, WHEN US SIDE WILL PRESENT COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS TO REDUCE SUBSTANTIALLY US PRESENCE AND VISIBILITY AT HELLENIKON;

C. SOFA DISCUSSIONS TO BEGIN WEEK OF JULY 14, BUT WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT UTILITY OF SOFA SUBGROUP MEETING AT THAT TIME WILL DEPEND ON COMPLETION OF STAFF WORK GOING FORWARD IN DOD AND AVAILABILITY OF GREEK EXPERTS SUCH AS ECONOMIDES;

D. DATE FOR RESUMING TELECOMMUNICATIONS DISCUSSIONS TO DEPEND ON COMPLETION OF STAFF WORK IN WASHINGTON, WITH DATES RANGING FROM MID-JULY TO MID-SEPTEMBER. FINALLY, CALOGERAS AND STEARNS AGREED THAT NO RPT NO DISCUSSIONS OF UMBRELLA AGREEMENT WAS FEASIBLE BEFORE ROUND III AT WHICH TIME, DEPENDING ON PROGRESS OF GREEK TALKS IN NATO AND OTHER RELATED FACTORS, US SIDE WOULD BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE FURTHER AMERICAN REACTION TO GREEK DRAFT PRESENTED IN ROUND II.

4. CALOGERAS MENTIONED TATOI IN PASSING BUT DID NOT REPEAT NOT PRESS THIS POINT. HE WAS NOT AWARE THAT SUBJECT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY AMB KUBISCH WITH BITSIOS AND WHEN INFORMED OF THIS FACT BY STEARNS HE AGREED THAT TATOI PROBLEM COULD BE TREATED AS SEPARATE SUBJECT OUTSIDE OF CONTEXT OF FORMAL BASE NEGOTIATIONS. HE COMMENTED HOWEVER THAT CARAMANLIS HAD TAKEN VERY STRONG POSITION ON TATOI IN EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH BITSIOS AND HIMSELF AND FOR THIS REASON CALOGERAS WOULD BE SURPRISED IF GOG RELAXED ITS PRESSURE ON THIS FACILITY.

5. IN DISCUSSION OFHELLENIKON, CALOGERAS SAID THAT HE HAD SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ATHENS 04045 021830Z

BEEN INFORMED BY GREEK DEFENSE MINISTRY THAT HELLENIC AIR FORCE PLANNED ON GREEK FORCE LEVEL OF APPROXIMATELY 600 GREEK PERSONNEL AT ENLARGED GREEK BASE AT HELLENIKON. ACCORDINGLY, GREEK SIDE WAS THINKING IN TERMS OF AN AMERICAN PRESENCE OF NO MORE THAN 300 US MILITARY THERE. WHICH US PERSONNEL STAYED AND WHICH DEPARTED WOULD BE UP TO AMERICAN SIDE. STEARNS REVIEWED ONCE AGAIN THE DIFFICULTIES THAT WOULD BE CREATED BY SHARP CUTS IN THE

US PRESENCE AT HELLENIKON AND SAID THAT HE HOPED GREEK SIDE WOULD NOT SEEK TO IMPOSE AN ARBITRARY CEILING ON US PRESENCE AT HELLENIKON.

6. ON HOMEPORTING STEARNS NOTED FINANCIAL LIABILITY WHICH WOULD BE INCURRED BY GREEK GOVT IF WE WERE DENIED FUTURE USE OF ELEFSIS PIER ON SATISFACTORY TERMS. CALOGERAS SAID THAT HE WOULD LOOK INTO THIS FURTHER BUT THAT HIS PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO NEGOTIATE TERMINATION OF THE FACILITIES AS WELL AS THE HOMEPORTING PROGRAM ITSELF.

7. COMMENT: TIMING AND WORK PROGRAM OUTLINED IN STEARNS-CALOGERAS DISCUSSION APPEARS TO MEET OUR NEEDS. RESULTS OF ROUND II HAVE NOT BEEN ATTACKED BY GREEK PRESS OR MODERATE OPPOSITION AND FOR THE TIME BEING GOG DOES NOT FEEL ITSELF UNDER SEVERE PRESSURE. HOPEFULLY THIS ATMOSPHERE WILL CONTINUE AND ALLOW US TO ADHERE TO THE TIMEBABLE OUTLINED ABOVE. IF SO, FOLLOWING SUBGROUP MEETINGS IN JUNE AND JULY, WE CAN EXPECT A SUMMER RECESS DURING AUGUST AND FIRST TWO WEEKS OF SEPTEMBER, WHICH WILL ENABLE US TO PREPARE FOR ROUND III SOMETIME IN OCTOBER.

8. A CAUTIONARY NOTE IS NECESSARY HOWEVER. AS WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST FOUR MONTHS, BASE NEGOTIATIONS ARE VIEWED IN POLITICAL TERMS BY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT. THIS MEANS THAT SHOULD PRESS OR OPPOSITION ATTENTION SUDDENLY BE FOCUSED ON THE NEGOTIATIONS--SOMETHING THAT COULD BE TRIGGERED BY DEVELOPMENTS IRRELEVANT TO THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES--GOG WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY REACT BY ATTEMPTING TO SPEED UP THE TIMETABLE AND TO ACCELERATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS ALREADY REACHED IN PRINCIPLE. FOR THIS REASON, WE MUST REMAIN ALERT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IN OUR PREFERRED TIMETABLE EVEN AS WE PLAN OUR OWN WORK TO CONFORM TO
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PAGE 04 ATHENS 04045 021830Z

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9. DEPARTMENT REPEAT AS DESIRED TO USNATO AND MILITARY ADDRESSEES.
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